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APPAREL merchandising

WHAT TODAY'S VENUS WEARS TO BED

WILL PENNEY'S SOFT LINES STRATEGY WORK?

THE LIMITED: UNLIMITED GROWTH

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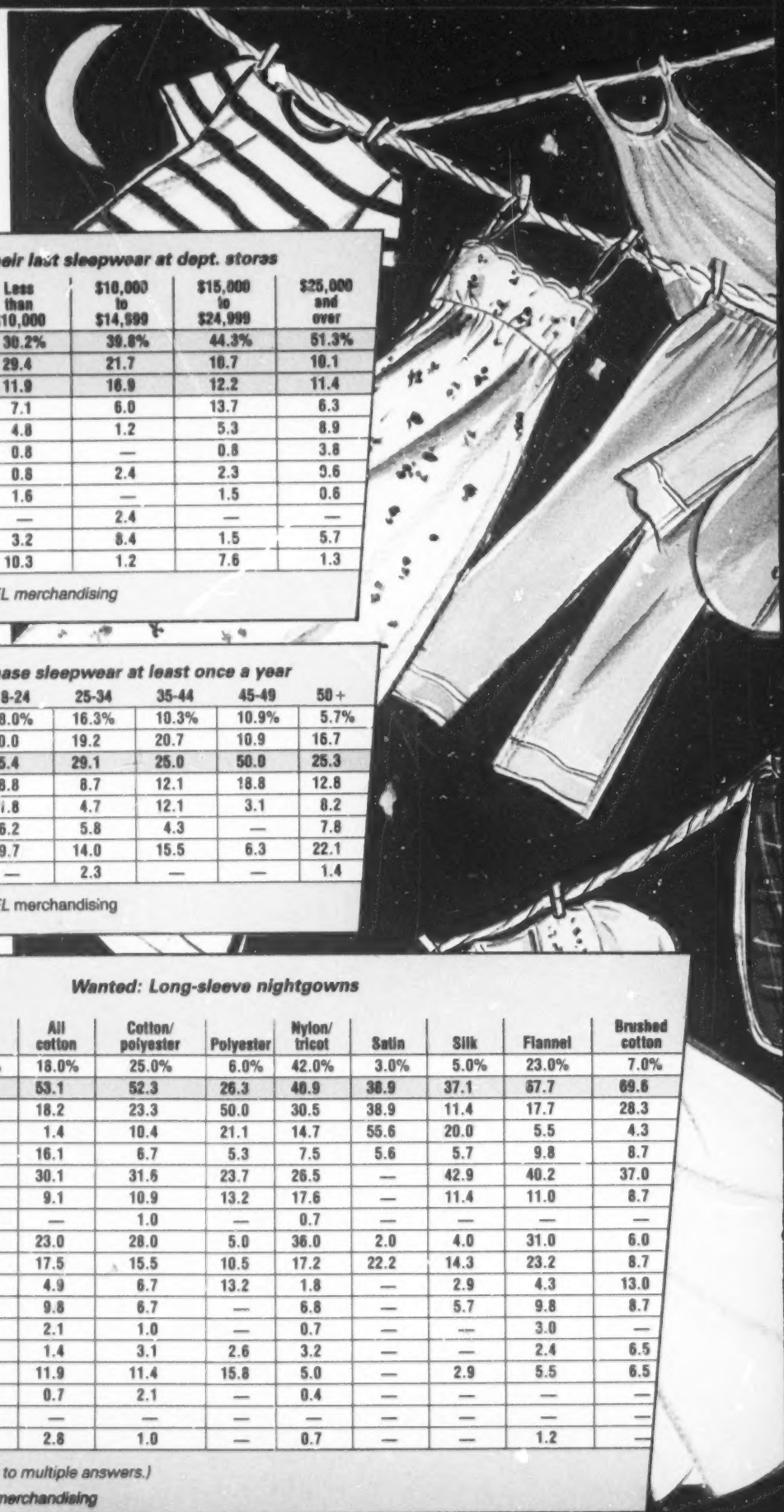

More than 40% bought their last sleepwear at dept. stores

	Total	Less than $10,000	$10,000 to $14,999	$15,000 to $24,999	$25,000 and over
Department stores	41.1%	30.2%	39.8%	44.3%	51.3%
Discount stores	17.5	29.4	21.7	10.7	10.1
J. C. Penney	11.5	11.9	16.9	12.2	11.4
Sears	8.7	7.1	6.0	13.7	6.3
Specialty stores	5.2	4.8	1.2	5.3	8.9
Lingerie shops	1.7	0.8	—	0.8	3.8
Off-price stores	1.4	0.8	2.4	2.3	5.6
Catalog/mail order	0.9	1.6	—	1.5	0.6
Montgomery Ward	0.3	—	2.4	—	—
Other	5.0	3.2	8.4	1.5	5.7
Don't know	6.6	10.3	1.2	7.6	1.3

Source: Gallup Organization for *APPAREL merchandising*

Six out of 10 women purchase sleepwear at least once a year

	Total	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-49	50+
3 or 4 times a year	9.8%	8.0%	16.3%	10.3%	10.9%	5.7%
Twice a year	19.6	30.0	19.2	20.7	10.9	16.7
Once a year	29.5	35.4	29.1	25.0	50.0	25.3
Every other year	11.7	8.8	8.7	12.1	18.8	12.8
Once every 3 or 4 years	6.5	1.8	4.7	12.1	3.1	8.2
Less often than that	5.8	6.2	5.8	4.3	—	7.8
Never	15.9	9.7	14.0	15.5	6.3	22.1
Don't know	1.2	—	2.3	—	—	1.4

Source: Gallup Organization for *APPAREL* merchandising

Wanted: Long-sleeve nightgowns

		Total	All cotton	Cotton/ polyester	Polyester	Nylon/ tricot	Satin	Silk	Flannel	Brushed cotton
Nightgowns	Total	83.0%	18.0%	25.0%	6.0%	42.0%	3.0%	5.0%	23.0%	7.0%
	Long with long sleeves	44.6	53.1	52.3	26.3	40.9	38.9	37.1	67.7	69.6
	Long with short sleeves	24.1	18.2	23.3	50.0	30.5	38.9	11.4	17.7	28.3
	Long with straps	10.9	1.4	10.4	21.1	14.7	55.6	20.0	5.5	4.3
	Short with long sleeves	8.1	16.1	6.7	5.3	7.5	5.6	5.7	9.8	8.7
	Short with short sleeves	26.8	30.1	31.6	23.7	26.5	—	42.9	40.2	37.0
	Short with straps	11.3	9.1	10.9	13.2	17.6	—	11.4	11.0	8.7
	Other	0.7	—	1.0	—	0.7	—	—	—	—
Pajamas	Total	24.0	23.0	28.0	5.0	36.0	2.0	4.0	31.0	6.0
	Man-tailored	15.4	17.5	15.5	10.5	17.2	22.2	14.3	23.2	8.7
	Sweat-type	4.4	4.9	6.7	13.2	1.8	—	2.9	4.3	13.0
	Baby dolls	8.2	9.8	6.7	—	6.8	—	5.7	9.8	8.7
	Other	1.5	2.1	1.0	—	0.7	—	—	3.0	—
	Lingerie/teddy	2.4	1.4	3.1	2.6	3.2	—	—	2.4	6.5
	T-shirt	7.9	11.9	11.4	15.8	5.0	—	2.9	5.5	6.5
	Other	0.8	0.7	2.1	—	0.4	—	—	—	—
	Nothing	3.3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Don't know/unspecified	2.1	2.8	1.0	—	0.7	—	—	1.2	—

(Responses add up to more than 100% due to multiple answers.)

Source: Gallup Organization for *APPAREL merchandising*

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ILLUSTRATION BY KATHY PALTZIK

Consumer Watch: women's nightwear

While *Playboy* may have become slicker and intimate apparel more fetching in the past 10 years, American women seem to be harking to a different beat. Nearly 50% are wearing long nightgowns with long sleeves to bed. What's more, close to 70% are wearing brushed cotton or flannel long-sleeve nightgowns.

These are just some of the findings of a nationwide poll conducted exclusively for *APPAREL merchandising* by the Gallup Organization. American women apparently are putting more store behind comfort and warmth than sexiness or intrigue.

They are also not purchasing sleepwear all that frequently. Less than 10% buy three to four times a year, not quite 20% buy twice a year, while 1 out of 3 buys only once a year. And some women never buy at all. Nearly 16% gave this response. Retailers take note: Of these women, 30% were between the ages of 25-44, today's target customers.

Just about as many women bought two to three months ago as bought over a year ago, 26.1% vs. 27.6%, respectively. These time periods scored the highest frequency, followed by 1 out of 5 purchasing six months to a year ago.

A large number of American women recently purchased their sleepwear at department stores. A little more than 40% went to one of these stores. Not surprisingly, over 50% of the women who shop there have household incomes of $25,000 or more.

Catalog chains and discounters were next on women's shopping lists. One out of 5 headed to Sears, Penney or Ward. Penney commanded the largest share, perhaps reflecting its strong commitment to soft lines. Sears followed and Ward's barely placed, with only 0.3% saying they would go there. Discounters were the popular shopping spot of 17.5% of American women (see chart).

While a large number purchase at department stores, women do not seem to be paying department store prices. Consider 1 out of 4 said she paid less than $10 for her last sleepwear. Or a little more than 1 out of 5 shelled out between $10 and $14, while another 20% paid between $15 and $19. Less than 16% paid between $20 and $49, and only 1.1% paid $50 or more. About 14% didn't know.

Women are not heavy purchasers of sleepwear. Most (61.9%) buy only one item at a time. Does this mean women are dissatisfied with their place of purchase? Not so.

According to the *Am*/Gallup Research, more than 4 out of 5 insisted they would return to the same place for additional sleepwear. Furthermore, most women maintained the selection was adequate. About 3 out of 4 found what they wanted.

Not as many women as might be thought purchased sleepwear on sale. Almost 40% paid full retail, while about 45% bought sleepwear at off-price. Approximately 15% could not remember.

Brand names also seemed to have slipped from memory. About 2 out of 3 forgot what brand they purchased. Of the brands shoppers could name, Penney placed the highest. About 8% wore Penney nightwear. Shoppers also named Vanity Fair (6.3%), Sears (5.8%), Barbizon (2.2%) and Miss Elaine (1.6%). No other brand placed above 1%.

American women, hands down, choose nightgowns as their favorite sleepwear. More than 80% opt to get into bed with these nightclothes. They also like pajamas but not nearly as much (24%). All other types of sleepwear pale in comparison: Roughly 8% want a T-shirt, only 2% chose a teddy.

Women also select fabrications for nightgowns that are industry workhorses. Nylon tricot turned up as a favorite for any type of nightgown as did cotton/polyester and flannel. Shoppers also purchased a lot of nylon tricot pajamas, as well as flannel and cotton/polyester blends.

Sleepwear is O.K. to give for gifts, the research revealed. Sixty per cent of the women said they would give it as a present. What would they give? Nightgowns, of course. ***Am***